

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Office Action of 12/20/05, independent claims 1, 12 and 17 have been amended to recite a “hinge system”. Page 6 of the Office Action appears to acknowledge the hinge system as means for allowing the hand rests to pivot freely and independently of one another as an especially patentable feature that is neither taught nor suggested by the art of record.

Accordingly, Claims 1, 12 and 17, and claims dependent therefrom should now be in condition for allowance.

In addition, objected to claims 18 and 23 have been rewritten in independent format to include all of the limitations of the base and intervening claims, as to place the objected to claims in condition for allowance.

Hence, claims 18 and 23, and claims dependent therefrom should now be in condition for allowance.

More specifically, at paragraph 2 of the Office Action claims 17, 19-21 and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) for reasons of obviousness over Mitzkus et al in view of the McGrath et al.

Claim 19 has been cancelled, and independent claim 17 now recites a “hinge system”, as flexible independent attachment means for affixing hand rests to the carrier body. Claim 31 is dependent from claim 17.

Thus, claims 17, 20-21 and 31 should be in condition for allowance.

At paragraph 3 of the Office Action, claims 1-8, 12-16 and 27-30 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Mitzkus et al in view of McGrath et al, and further in view of Kline et al.

Claim 1 also features as part of the microscope carrier connecting means for the hand rests a hinge system allowing the hand rests to pivot freely and independently of one another. None of the references, including Kline et al teach this structural feature, as acknowledged by the Office Action.

Claims 1-8, 12-16 and 27-30 should now be in condition for allowance.

Claims 9-11 and 22 have been allowed.

Objected to claims 18 and 23-26 have been rewritten in independent format as recommended in the Office Action .

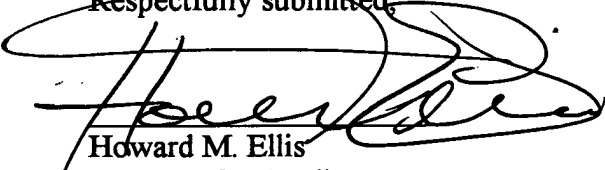
As stated above, claims 17, 20-21 and 31 should also be in condition for allowance.

SUMMARY

In view of the amendments to the claims and the foregoing remarks, this application should now be in condition for allowance. Notification of the same at an early date is earnestly solicited.

February 21, 2006

Respectfully submitted,



Howard M. Ellis
Attorney for Applicants
Reg. No. 25856
(716)626-1564